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Response dated February 7, 2006
Reply to Office Action of October 11, 2005

Amendments to the Claims:

Please cancel claims 1, 3, 7-11, 15, 18 and 21, and amend claims 4 and 5 as follows. The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-3 (Cancelled).

Claim 4 (Currently Amended). [[The]] An advertisement distribution system which receives advertisement contents from at least one advertisement provider through a communications network, and provides at least one advertisement user with the
5 received advertisement contents through the communication network, said system comprising:

an advertising information storage unit which stores advertisement contents received from the at least one advertisement provider in association with advertisement
10 provider information for controlling provision of an advertisement and corresponding to the received advertisement contents;

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an advertisement-user information storage unit which stores advertisement usage information for specifying a desired
15 advertisement of the at least one advertisement user;
an advertisement extraction unit which extracts advertisement contents corresponding to advertisement provider information in association with the stored advertisement usage information; and
20 a transmission unit which transmits the advertisement contents extracted by said advertisement extraction unit to the at least one advertisement user having requested the advertisement contents,
wherein the advertisement provider information includes an
25 advertisement providing condition which is to be specified by the at least one advertisement provider for predetermined advertisement contents;
the advertisement user information includes an advertisement specification condition which is to be specified by the at least
30 one advertisement user;
the advertisement extraction unit searches an advertisement providing condition conforming to the input advertisement specification condition, and retrieves advertisement contents corresponding to the advertisement provider information including
35 the searched advertisement providing condition;

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said advertisement extraction unit includes an advertisement selection unit which selects, when more than a predetermined number of items of advertisement provider information including the searched advertisement providing condition are retrieved, a
40 predetermined number of items of advertisement provider information included in the retrieved items of advertisement provider information; and

said advertisement selection unit generates, when more than a predetermined number of items of the advertisement provider
45 information are retrieved, a predetermined number of random numbers which corresponds to the number of the retrieved items of advertisement provider information, and selects a predetermined number of items of advertisement provider information corresponding to the generated random numbers.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended). ~~[[The]]~~ An advertisement distribution system which receives advertisement contents from at least one advertisement provider through a communications network, and provides at least one advertisement user with the
5 received advertisement contents through the communications network, said system comprising:

an advertisement information storage unit which stores advertisement contents received from the at least one

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advertisement provider in association with advertisement provider
10 information for controlling provision of an advertisement and
corresponding to the received advertisement contents;

an advertisement-user information storage unit which stores
advertisement usage information for specifying a desired
advertisement of the at least one advertisement user;

15 an advertisement extraction unit which extracts
advertisement contents corresponding to advertisement provider
information in association with the stored advertisement usage
information; and

a transmission unit which transmits the advertisement
20 contents extracted by said advertisement extraction unit to the
at least one advertisement user having requested the
advertisement contents,

wherein the advertisement provider information includes an
advertisement providing condition which is to be specified by the
25 at least one advertisement provider for predetermined
advertisement contents;

the advertisement user information includes an advertisement
specification condition which is to be specified by the at least
one advertisement user;

30 the advertisement extraction unit searches an advertisement
providing condition conforming to the input advertisement

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specification condition, and retrieves advertisement contents corresponding to the advertisement provider information including the searched advertisement providing condition; and

35 said advertisement extraction unit includes a changing unit, which changes an item parameter included in the advertisement specification condition when a number of items of advertisement provider information including the advertisement providing condition does not reach a predetermined number, so as to search
40 the advertisement providing condition conforming to the changed item parameter included in the advertisement specification condition.

Claim 6 (Original). The advertisement distribution system according to claim 5, wherein said changing unit repeatedly changes a corresponding item parameter included in the advertisement specification condition, until the number of items
5 of advertisement provider information extracted by said advertisement extraction unit reaches the predetermined number.

Claims 7-11 (Cancelled).

Claim 12 (Previously Presented). A method for receiving advertising contents sent from an advertisement provider using an

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advertisement provider terminal through a communications network,
and sending the received advertisement contents to at least one
5 advertisement user from an advertisement server, said method
comprising the steps of:

storing the advertisement contents sent from the
advertisement provider using the advertisement provider terminal
and advertisement attribute information in association with each
10 other;

storing advertisement user information sent from the at
least one advertisement user using the sent advertisement
contents;

retrieving advertisement attribute information conforming to
15 the stored advertisement user information, and extracting
advertisement contents corresponding to the retrieved
advertisement attribute information;

sending the extracted advertisement contents to the at least
one advertisement user;

20 receiving predetermined advertisement contents sent from
said advertisement server to the at least one advertisement user
and advertisement attribute information corresponding to the
predetermined advertisement contents, and storing the received
advertisement contents and the advertisement attribute
25 information sequentially in received order;

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outputting and specifying one of the advertisement contents included in the stored advertisement contents, when using an advertisement;

outputting the advertisement contents specified by said
30 outputting step;

updating and retaining, every time the advertisement content is output by said outputting step, advertisement-usage-context management information corresponding to the advertisement content;

35 sending the advertisement-usage-context management information retained by said updating and retaining step to said advertisement server at predetermined intervals;

obtaining a number of output advertisement contents included in the advertisement-usage-context management information sent to
40 said advertisement server from said at least one advertisement user in said sending step;

determining whether the obtained number of output advertisement contents exceeds a maximum number of to-be-provided advertisement included in the stored advertisement attribute
45 information; and

when it is determined that the obtained number of output advertisement contents has exceeded the maximum number of to-be-provided advertisements, removing the advertisement content

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from target advertisement contents to be extracted by said
50 extracting step.

Claim 13 (Previously Presented). The method according to
claim 12, further comprising the steps of:

calculating an amount of money which is charged for
advertisement charges toward the advertisement provider, based on
5 the obtained number of output advertisement contents which is
obtained by said calculating step; and

issuing a bill representing the amount of money which is
calculated by said calculating step, to said advertisement
provider.

Claim 14 (Original). The method according to claim 12,
further comprising the steps of:

calculating a payment amount to be paid to the advertisement
user, based on the obtained number of output advertisement
5 contents obtained by said obtaining step; and

issuing a payment statement representing the payment amount
to be paid which is calculated by said calculating step.

Claim 15 (Cancelled).

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Claim 16 (Previously Presented). A computer readable recording medium which records a program for controlling a computer function as:

an advertisement information storage unit which stores
5 advertisement contents received from the at least one advertisement provider in association with advertisement provider information for controlling provision of an advertisement and corresponding to the received advertisement contents;

an advertisement-user information storage unit which stores
10 advertisement usage information for specifying a desired advertisement of the at least one advertisement user;

an advertisement extraction unit which extracts
advertisement contents corresponding to advertisement provider information in association with the stored advertisement usage
15 information; and

a transmission unit which transmits the advertisement contents extracted by said advertisement extraction unit to the at least one advertisement user having requested the advertisement contents,

20 wherein the advertisement provider information includes an advertisement providing condition which is to be specified by the

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at least one advertisement provider for predetermined advertisement contents;

the advertisement-user information includes an
25 advertisement-specification condition which is to be specified by the at least one advertisement user;

the advertisement extraction unit searches an advertisement providing condition conforming to the input advertisement-specification condition, and retrieves advertisement contents
30 corresponding to the advertisement provider information including the searched advertisement providing condition;

said advertisement extraction unit includes an advertisement selection unit which selects, when more than a predetermined number of items of advertisement provider information including
35 the searched advertisement providing condition are retrieved, a predetermined number of items of advertisement provider information included in the retrieved items of advertisement provider information; and

said advertisement selection unit generates, when more than
40 a predetermined number of items of the advertisement provider information are retrieved, a predetermined number of random numbers which corresponds to the number of the retrieved items of advertisement provider information, and selects a predetermined

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number of items of advertisement provider information
45 corresponding to the generated random numbers.

Claim 17 (Previously Presented). A computer readable
recording medium which records a program for controlling a
computer function as:

an advertisement information storage unit which stores
5 advertisement contents received from the at least one
advertisement provider in association with advertisement
provider information for controlling provision of an
advertisement and corresponding to the received advertisement
contents;
10 an advertisement-user information storage unit which stores
advertisement usage information for specifying a desired
advertisement of the at least one advertisement user;
an advertisement extraction unit which extracts
advertisement contents corresponding to advertisement provider
15 information in association with the stored advertisement usage
information; and
a transmission unit which transmits the advertisement
contents extracted by said advertisement extraction unit to the
at least one advertisement user having requested the
20 advertisement contents,

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wherein the advertisement provider information includes an advertisement providing condition which is to be specified by the at least one advertisement provider for predetermined advertisement contents;

25 the advertisement-user information includes an advertisement-specification condition which is to be specified by the at least one advertisement user;

30 the advertisement extraction unit searches an advertisement providing condition conforming to the input advertisement-specification condition, and retrieves advertisement contents corresponding to the advertisement provider information including the searched advertisement providing condition; and

35 said advertisement extraction unit includes a changing unit, which changes an item parameter included in the advertisement specification condition when a number of items of advertisement provider information including the advertisement providing condition does not reach a predetermined number, so as to search the advertisement providing condition conforming to the changed item parameter included in the advertisement specification
40 condition.

Claim 18 (Cancelled).

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Claim 19 (Previously Presented). A program data signal embodied in a carrierwave for controlling a computer function as:

an advertising information storage unit which stores advertisement contents received from the at least one

5 advertisement provider in association with advertisement provider information for controlling provision of an advertisement and corresponding to the received advertisement contents;

an advertisement-user information storage unit which stores advertisement usage information for specifying a desired

10 advertisement of the at least one advertisement user;

an advertisement extraction unit which extracts advertisement contents corresponding to advertisement provider information in association with the stored advertisement usage information; and

15 a transmission unit which transmits the advertisement contents extracted by said advertisement extraction unit to the at least one advertisement user having requested the advertisement contents,

wherein the advertisement provider information includes an advertisement providing condition which is to be specified by the
20 at least one advertisement provider for predetermined advertisement contents;

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the advertisement-user information includes an advertisement-specification condition which is to be specified by
25 the at least one advertisement user;

the advertisement extraction unit searches an advertisement providing condition conforming to the input advertisement-specification condition, and retrieves advertisement contents corresponding to the advertisement
30 provider information including the searched advertisement providing condition;

said advertisement extraction unit includes an advertisement selection unit which selects, when more than a predetermined number of items of advertisement provider information including
35 the searched advertisement providing condition are retrieved, a predetermined number of items of advertisement provider information included in the retrieved items of advertisement provider information; and

said advertisement selection unit generates, when more than
40 a predetermined number of items of the advertisement provider information are retrieved, a predetermined number of random numbers which corresponds to the number of the retrieved items of advertisement provider information, and selects a predetermined number of items of advertisement provider information
45 corresponding to the generated random numbers.

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Claim 20 (Previously Presented). A program data signal embodied in a carrierwave for controlling a computer function as:

an advertisement information storage unit which stores advertisement contents received from the at least one
5 advertisement provider in association with advertisement provider information for controlling provision of an advertisement and corresponding to the received advertisement contents;

an advertisement-user information storage unit which stores
10 advertisement usage information for specifying a desired advertisement of the at least one advertisement user;

an advertisement extraction unit which extracts advertisement contents corresponding to advertisement provider information in association with the stored advertisement usage
15 information; and

a transmission unit which transmits the advertisement contents extracted by said advertisement extraction unit to the at least one advertisement user having requested the advertisement contents,

20 wherein the advertisement provider information includes an advertisement providing condition which is to be specified by the

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at least one advertisement provider for predetermined advertisement contents;

the advertisement-user information includes an
25 advertisement-specification condition which is to be specified by
the at least one advertisement user;

the advertisement extraction unit searches an advertisement
providing condition conforming to the input
advertisement-specification condition, and retrieves
30 advertisement contents corresponding to the advertisement
provider information including the searched advertisement
providing condition; and

said advertisement extraction unit includes a changing unit,
which changes an item parameter included in the advertisement
35 specification condition when a number of items of advertisement
provider information including the advertisement providing
condition does not reach a predetermined number, so as to search
the advertisement providing condition conforming to the changed
item parameter included in the advertisement specification
40 condition.

Claim 21 (Cancelled).